

Remarks

Claims 1 to 27 are in this application.

Claims 5 to 25 have been previously allowed.

Claims 1 to 4 were rejected in a Final Rejection dated April 26, 2002 and the rejection affirmed in a Decision on Appeal dated August 15, 2003.

Claims 26 and 27 are new claims.

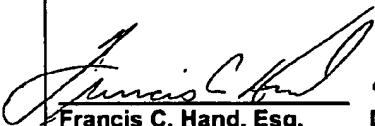
Claim 1 requires a golf club to have a head with a flat striking face as well as an alignment means extending along a surface of the shaft and the head of the club "in a plane. . .parallel to said striking face of said head". Claim 1 was previously rejected as being unpatentable over Reach in view of Seisaku and the rejection affirmed. Each of the Examiner and the Board of Appeal stated that Reach discloses an alignment means arranged in a common plane with the longitudinal axis of the shaft and "parallel to the striking face of the head". Each of the Examiner and the Board is in error in this regard. Reach clearly shows that the face A² of the golf club is inclined to the vertical. Hence, the striking face of the Reach golf club is not parallel to the plane of the sighting line c.

Seisaku describes the use of a tape on the shaft of a putter that provides a straight line or edge to be parallel to the face of the putter. However, there is no description that the face of the putter is inclined to the vertical as in Reach or not. Thus, while the line defined by the Seisaku tape may be parallel to an inclined face of the putter, there is no teaching of extending the tape onto the putter head in order to define a plane which can be visually placed vertically.

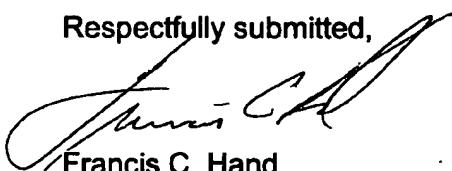
Note is made that while it may be possible to place the Seisaku tape 4 and shaft 3 vertically, the tape 4 cannot be used by itself to place the striking face of the putter in a plane perpendicular to a line of sight to a hole. With applicant's claimed structure, the

alignment means forms a plane that can be utilized to place the plane of the alignment means perpendicular to a line of sight to a hole and thereby the striking face of the putter that is parallel to that plane of the alignment means. Thus, if the golf club is turned clockwise, the plane of the alignment means would turn away from the perpendicular with the line of sight to the hole. In the case of a tape such as in Seisaku, rotation of the shaft would not signal to the golfer that the putter head is no longer perpendicular to the line of sight to the hole. (Even though the line remains vertical to the ground).

New claims 26 and 27 further define applicant's invention and are believed to be allowable over the references of record for similar reasons as expressed above.

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